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LABOUR MONTHLY

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EDITOR · R PALME DUTT

The Marshall "Plan" **Quaestor**

Production in the Foundry
Jim Gardner

Democracy of a New Type
Eugene Varga

Caucasus Week—II
J. Todd and D. N. Pritt, K.C., M.P.

AUGUST, 1947

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The Grip of the Dollar

(The Notes of the Month by R.P.D. will be resumed in September.)

TWO years after victory, two years after the liberation of the world from fascist domination of the Axis powers, what situation confronts the people of Britain? Two years after the General Election results had opened visions of a post-war period far different from the disastrous two years that followed the 1914-18 war, how far have the hopes of the electors who voted for the Labour Party's programme been realised? Two years after that election victory made it possible for Attlee's name to stand beside that of the Soviet Premier and the United States President in the signature of the Potsdam Agreement, what progress is there in the declared intentions of Three-Power unity set forth at Potsdam, Yalta and Teheran? The Labour Government, in power for over 100 weeks since the ending of hostilities, cannot escape the question. The delegates to the Trades Union Congress next month are also faced with this gigantic query. On them, too, lies the responsibility not only to acknowledge the grim answer given by the history of these two years, but also to find the policy that will open the way to a better prospect.

The Serious Shortages

What situation confronts the people of Britain today? Not only the all-too-familiar situation of a high cost of living, of wages unable to keep pace with the rise in prices, of swelling capitalist profits, confronts them, not only the shortages in food, clothing and shelter, but also a hitherto unknown deficiency in the productive forces. Coal, electricity, steel, agricultural products and transport are all in short supply. Above all, there is a shortage of manpower, made worse by a foreign policy with mysterious commitments that stopped demobilisation last November and proffered Anders' Poles to man Britain's industries in place of Britain's sons. True, other chief countries of Europe are experiencing a similar under-production situation, similar shortages of manpower and resources. But whereas they have an overall economic plan, in Britain up to now we have no such thing, and our working population as a whole are without such a guide, target and incentive. Whereas they are marching forward amid all their difficulties with a justified confidence in their future, here a prospect of gloom was given by Mr. Morrison's speech of the 8th July, in which he dwelt upon the risks of disaster ahead and expressed the hope he had in aid coming from outside Europe.

Aid from Uncle Sam?

Aid from outside means aid from the United States as money-lender. But in these last two years the biggest feature of change and

turn-about, and the chief responsibility for the difficult situation of the British people, lies precisely in the new expansions of United States imperialism. The moneylenders of Wall Street drive a hard bargain. Europe's extremity is Uncle Sam's opportunity. With Roosevelt dead the Roosevelt policies were scrapped. With the ending of the war came the sudden harsh cutting-off of Lease Lend. Within a few months the supplementary to Lease Lend for all the devastated countries, the Unrra organisation, was strangled. After five long months of negotiations and several months more of Congress discussion there was ratified the Anglo-American Loan Agreement under conditions that are proving more niggardly, extortionate and humiliating with each month that passes. But this was not all. Price controls were lifted in the United States, with the result that the nominal value of the Loan of £937 millions rapidly shrank. Let Mr. Morrison's words be the witness:

"When our representatives went to Washington for the loan negotiations we estimated we should need 5,000 million United States dollars to see us through until our production had recovered sufficiently to enable us to pay our way. What we actually got was three-quarters of this sum—1,250 million dollars less than our estimated needs. Again, the purchasing power of this already reduced sum was further reduced by a rise which we estimate to be 40 per cent. in United States prices." (*Hansard*, July 8).

Ten days after that speech, only £325 millions were left out of the £937 million which was to cover the period up to the year 1950. Now the loan will run out by the end of this year. The United States will sell—and at a high price; but they will not buy—even at a low price.

The Terms of Trade

Moreover, as Mr. Dalton said in that debate, "The terms of trade are constantly moving against us." Take the example of rubber, a sterling area commodity: and take Sir John Hay, chairman of a rubber company, as witness:

"Rubber is still the biggest of all our exports to the U.S.A. and is capable of providing an amount of dollar exchange equal to the total of all United Kingdom domestic exports. That being so, any distortion of the price of rubber in relation to U.S.A. imports must be a matter of very great concern, particularly in present circumstances, to this country as well as Malaya. In terms of the inter-changeability of rubber for imported goods from the U.S.A. as between relative values prevailing in 1939 and now, and taking the unit in each case as one English lb., we find that whereas we received in 1939 $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of cotton for 1 lb. of rubber, we now get less than $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; lard equivalent was $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., now $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; tobacco 9 ozs., now 4 ozs.; lubricating oil one gallon, now two-fifths; 1 lb. of pork becomes $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., and whereas for $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of rubber we got $11\frac{1}{2}$ bushels of wheat we now get only $3\frac{1}{2}$ bushels. In other words, in terms of U.S. imports to this country the present price of rubber is equivalent only to a quarter to one-half of the 1939 price." (*The Times*, 18/6/47).

This is the meaning of the Anglo-American Loan Agreement with which British Foreign Policy is linked up. At Fulton, in Missouri, Winston Churchill proclaimed the reactionary Tory policy thenceforward to be followed without disclaimer by the Foreign Office. But what in the specious rhetoric of Churchill was phrased as the need for

the United Kingdom and the United States to "walk together in majesty and peace" became in the day-to-day administration of the Foreign Office the cringing and suppliant attitude of the mendicant, the attitude of debtor to creditor.

Debtor and Creditor

Twice this country has had a post-war Debt Agreement with the United States. The first was the 1922 Debt Agreement on which the United Kingdom defaulted ten years later. This time the terms are loaded with economic conditions of such a kind that last December Mr. Dalton was sharply brought to book by the U.S. Treasury over a clause of his trading agreement with the Argentine and compelled to promise that he would do no such thing again: while at the Geneva International Trade Conference this summer the British delegation is committed in advance to support of whatever may be the main Yankee propositions.

But the coils were as yet only half unwound: and it is this summer that the fuller disclosure of the money-lender's policy is made, of the frenzy with which Yankee imperialism is attacking the working-class movement both within the United States and throughout the world. The new law against Trade Unions within the U.S.A. is complementary to the Truman Doctrine in foreign affairs. The two go together.

Trade Union Rights

The history of the struggle for trade union rights was marked by a stress at different times on certain trade union methods and principles such as the method of collective bargaining including the right of recognition of the union; the right to strike, including the use of peaceful picketing; the trade union principle not to touch black work as helping blacklegs against trade unionists; the right to political action, with the use of funds for political purposes; the free, unfettered right of the unions as voluntary associations to draw up their own rule-book and lay down their own constitution without any state interference whatsoever. All these rights and principles are attacked or even swept away by this new Hartley-Taft Act. In this century the struggle of the British trade union movement for its democratic rights has been marked by a series of famous cases and acts of Parliament: the Taff Vale Judgment (empowering the masters to sue a union for any loss occasioned by a strike and so enabling them to wreck the union funds); the Osborne Judgment of 1909 (denying the right of unions to political representation or to political activity of the kind which for over a generation they had been carrying on, ever since the first Labour members were elected in 1874); and the Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Act of 1927. These monstrous judgments and this most reactionary law are now applied in most respects to the trade unions of the U.S.A. Thus the successive specific attempts of the ruling class in Britain to injure the trade union movement, all of them successfully reversed or

repealed in this country, have now all together been applied (or provisions similar to them) in the United States. But the Hartley-Taft Act goes beyond this. It makes certain kinds of strikes unlawful: (e.g., strikes against black work or to enforce necessary safety measures would render the union liable both to an injunction and to heavy damages to any employer who sued them in the Federal courts): it favours the growth of company unions or yellow unions, and denies the right of collective bargaining to many grades of workers. Finally, it exempts employers from bargaining collectively with any union unless that union has filed sworn and truthful affidavits from all its elected officers that they are neither communists nor supporters of communist principles! Here the Japanese fascist "law of dangerous thoughts" appears to have been added to the worst examples of British anti-labour legislation or judicial decisions to make such a union-destroying law as has never been known in any advanced country. This is what the Wall Street millionaires and their Congress mean by "democracy."

Truman Doctrine

The same kind of fight which United States capitalism is waging against trade unionism and the organised working-class is also the pattern of its foreign policy. The proclamation of March 12th of the Truman Doctrine (blatant statement of expansionist imperialist policy already realised in a number of countries from China's quarter of the human population to Iceland's tiny figure) was occasioned by the loans for Turkish armaments and for civil wars, for mass arrests and it may be for massacres in Greece. But the policy was intended for all European states. It was a call to their governments to break with the organised working-class and with the parties of the working class. It was the summons for De Gasperi to break with the Socialists and Communists in Italy and form his dollar-backed Cabinet of nonentities and reactionaries. In France it was a Socialist Premier who was obedient to the heavenly vision of the dollar loan and was willing to drive out of the Government the largest party of the French Parliament, democratically chosen by the French people. Meanwhile every reactionary element that once crouched under the flag of Fascism and hoped to conquer under the sign of the swastika now saw their hopes of victory over the working class revived by the prospect of a renewed reactionary offensive under the sign of the dollar.

The New Democracies

But in the countries of Europe where resistance to Fascism had been strongest, in the states of a new democracy, there was no yielding. Professor Varga, in his article in this issue, analyses the features common to these countries, and in his analysis discloses the inner strength of these democracies of a new type. It is this that enables them to resist the attempts at penetration by United States capital, or any sapping of the position held by peasants and by the organised working class. These countries are relying on their own strength and

on the building up of an economy that goes in the direction of Socialism. Hence, when the United States Secretary of State Marshall spoke on 6th June as follow-up to his President's doctrine, these countries where a new type of democracy has developed were able to reckon on their own mutual support to maintain their independence. Since then the high prospects which the governments of these democracies of a new type held out to their people have been verified by the successes of their economic plans as shown by the figures for the first half of 1947. Not only in the Soviet Union (103 per cent. fulfilled of the Plan for all industry for the second quarter of 1947 and a good harvest expected) but in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, their economic plans that bring out every ounce of effort in common cause are being fulfilled in the main or overfulfilled. Even in Hungary, where gangs of fascists had to be smoked out this summer, their harvest is so assured that their agricultural products are to be exchanged for British exports. In each of these countries, and indeed in all countries once occupied by the fascist powers, the working-class movement is tenfold stronger than before, and the reactionary elements basically weaker. So it will be a vain hope for United States imperialism to clamp down its domination on them as once they hoped nigh on a quarter of a century ago to impose a long-term Dawes Plan on Germany.

The Rescue of Britain

It is not the countries of Eastern Europe that are in danger. It is we who have to be forewarned against the danger of a Dawes Plan for Britain. It is Britain which is in danger of ceasing to play an independent role. It is British economy which is in "the dollar's grip" as Mr. Bevin belatedly avowed to the Transport and General Workers' Union Conference on the 17th July. It is Britain that requires to be rescued. But this rescue can be carried out, not through aid from outside but only by the British people themselves. That effort of the British people themselves can only be successful on a number of conditions.

The foreign policy that has tied Britain to American imperialism has to be changed and the closest friendship built up with the Soviet Union, the new democracies of Europe, the progressive forces in every country, including the trade unionists of the United States and the progressive masses whose outlook has been expressed by Henry Wallace. The programme for which the people voted in the General Election has to be put into force with the utmost speed. Demobilisation of another half-million from the forces, manpower *attracted* to the coal industry and other vital industries, the speediest re-equipment of the staple trades, equal pay for equal work, necessary wage increases—it is along this path that Britain will recover its independence and liberty of action.

July 20, 1947.

R. PAGE ARNOT

THE MARSHALL "PLAN"

by QUAESTOR

THOSE struggling to make head or tail of the medley of platitudes and polemics with which the Marshall "plan" has filled their daily newspapers would do well to start with one big incontrovertible fact about the world situation after the war. It is that the area of Europe under the control of monopoly capital has visibly shrunk, and the boundaries of the area of Socialism—either actual, in the U.S.S.R., or potential in the new democracies of Eastern Europe—have visibly advanced, as a result of the war.

The aggressors against the U.S.S.R. have been completely defeated, not only by the military overthrow of Hitlerism in Germany and the setting of half Germany on the road to democracy free from feudal survivals and monopoly capitalism, but also—no less important—by the failure of British Tory hopes that Soviet economy would be bled white by the war, and Soviet political strength shattered. The Fourth Five Year Plan of the U.S.S.R. is being successfully carried out. Moreover, in a number of countries there has been established strong, resolute and clear-sighted rule by the people, which (as other articles in this issue show) is moving away from the bourgeois-landlord system of economy and towards the Socialist system.

This is the reality in Eastern Europe. It was the real background, stripped of verbiage, of the famous Truman proposals of March 12th, which provided \$400 million for military aid to the fascist Government of Greece and the terrorist Government of large landowners and business men which rules Turkey; and which declared that the United States must give economic and financial aid to fight "totalitarian regimes" such as those of Rumania, Bulgaria and "a number of other countries." These proposals were followed up by Acheson's speech of May 8, in which he promised "top priority for American reconstruction aid" for "free peoples who are seeking to preserve their independence and democratic institutions and human freedoms against totalitarian pressures either internal or external." The lesson was driven home by the grant of a loan of \$250 million to France by the American-controlled World Bank directly the Catholic-Socialist coalition had expelled the Communists from the French Government (May 9, 1947); and by the welcome given by the U.S. Secretary of State Marshall to the purely Catholic administration formed in Italy on May 30, thanks to the expulsion of the Communists and Socialists from the Government—a welcome followed up by the promise:

"We shall continue to give aid to the Italian people who have demonstrated their sincere and abiding faith in democratic processes for the preservation of their individual liberties and basic human rights" (*Times*, 3/6/1947).

The blunt and brutal proclamation of Wall Street's purpose—to try and reverse the verdict of the European peoples after the war—

from the very beginning caused acute discomfort to the British capitalist class—not so much because they are more farsighted than their American colleagues as because they have to reckon with a working-class movement in Britain more powerful and more mature than that of the U.S.A.

Nevertheless, these warnings fell for the time being on heedless ears. On June 5, at Harvard, Marshall made the speech announcing his “plan”—promising American economic assistance and support, “so far as it may be practical,” to European countries (“a number, if not all,”) who came to an agreement among themselves on “a programme designed to place Europe on its feet economically.” If this money were not provided, said Marshall, Europe in the next 3 or 4 years would “face economic, social and political deterioration of a very grave character.” But, he was careful to add, “Governments, political parties or groups which seek to perpetuate human misery in order to profit from it, politically or otherwise, will encounter the opposition of the United States” (*Times*, 6/6/47).

There was no doubt in any country that this meant the exclusion of the U.S.S.R. and a number of other countries and an effort to raise a new barrier to the advance of Socialism in Europe. “It is assumed that all western European countries would be included, and that the scheme would embrace Poland and Czechoslovakia to the east,” commented the *Times* parliamentary correspondent (7/6/47). A special survey of the world’s needs had been proceeding at the State Department for some weeks, wrote the *News Chronicle* diplomatic correspondent (7/6/47), and one could make a “reasonable guess” that this survey had shown “a comprehensive plan for Europe (especially Western Europe) to be a matter for first priority.” What weighed most with the American Government about the Marshall scheme was “the greater need for, and greater difficulty of maintaining, governments of a more characteristically European pattern in Western and Southern Europe,” explained the *Times* City column (9/6/47).

Unfortunately for Marshall and for Mr. Bevin, however, this new edition of the Truman plan had been accompanied by some unexpected indiscretions. “Before Mr. Marshall’s speech there had been unofficial and informal exchanges of views between members of the British Embassy and members of the State Department and other administrative departments on this matter, and from these talks an outline was emerging of the procedure which might be adopted to give effect to this offer of financial aid,” explained the *Times* parliamentary correspondent in the report quoted earlier. And Guy Eden in the *Daily Express* the same day confirmed that the plan had been “discussed unofficially in London and Washington before Mr. Marshall’s speech.” Other diplomatic correspondents wrote in the same sense. Mr. Bevin’s department hurriedly issued a lame explanation that “His Majesty’s Government had no prior knowledge” of the speech—which no one asserted it had—and that it would take urgent steps “to follow up Mr.

Marshall's proposal with the United States Department" (*Times*, 9/6/47).

The meaning of these urgent steps became clear on June 12, when Marshall at a press conference grudgingly explained that by Europe he had meant "everything west of Asia" (*Times*, 13/6/47), and when Bevin declared "We were glad last night to know that misunderstanding has been removed by including Russia in the proposals" (*Times*, 14/6/47).

Mr. Bevin now set about showing the clumsy Americans how to do it. Rarely has an international conference been summoned to the accompaniment of such obvious provocations of, and insults to, one of its leading participants. To begin with, in the very same speech on June 13 in which Bevin welcomed Marshall's "footnote," he announced that, in order to explore how best to respond to Marshall's lead, the British Government was going to consult France in the first instance, and what he vaguely called "other European nations" later. To emphasise the point, he declared: "France, Great Britain and the United States—almost in a direct line geographically—have a great common interest" (*Times*, 14/6/47)—as though Britain, under article V of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 1942 which Mr. Bevin so recently told Stalin he adhered to, had not as great a "common interest" with the U.S.S.R. On June 17, Bevin flew to Paris, and for two days the British and French Governments held a demonstrative consultation in which they worked out all the essential elements of the plan which was later presented, first to Molotov and then to the Paris conference of 15 Governments on July 12. After their talks had begun, the British Ambassador in Moscow (June 17) was still confining himself to asking Molotov whether the Soviet Government had any "observations" which it "may care to offer": and only after the Paris talks were completed (June 19) was the Soviet Government invited to a conference during the week beginning June 23 (*Tass statement*, 21/6/47).

Then, while the Soviet Government was considering the invitation, the British Government did its best to make up the Russians' mind for them. On the day of Mr. Bevin's return from Paris (June 19), a foreign debate was held in the House of Commons which was marked by a series of the most violent and hostile attacks on the U.S.S.R. and on the new democracies ever heard in Parliament. It has been established as recognised Parliamentary procedure that, if the Government feels that a foreign affairs debate will embarrass it in delicate foreign negotiations, it can ask for postponement. Not only did the Government fail to do so, but Bevin himself joined in attacks on Hungary, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and on "dictators" with whom there was "difficulty in negotiating when there was an underlying political ideology being pursued." As though to make assurance doubly sure, Mr. Attlee on June 21 made a vituperative and slanderous attack on the Governments of Eastern Europe at Barnsley (*Times*, 23/6/47).

Simultaneously it was announced that U.S. Under-Secretary of

(Continued on page 249)

PRODUCTION IN THE FOUNDRY

By JIM GARDNER

FOUNDRIES supply the castings for housing, for building construction and for the cast components of machinery and equipment essential to all our industries. Not the least of the problems inherited by the Labour Government was to break the foundry bottle-neck and to find the labour force to produce the castings. This was no easy problem in an industry notoriously unattractive from years of capitalist neglect and intensive exploitation of the workpeople.

On the initiative of the foundry trade unions, the "Committee on Conditions in Iron Foundries" was set up to investigate and make recommendations for the provision of proper amenities, adequate ventilating and heating arrangements, and such other improvements as would remove dust and fumes and similar objectionable features traditionally associated with foundry employment. It is expected that this report will be published in the very near future.

While the Committee on Conditions in Iron Foundries was at work, consultations with Government Departments resulted in agreements for deferment of military service, Class B releases, the introduction of green labour, upgraded labour, young people to begin an apprenticeship up to 20 years of age, and for the introduction of Italian labour. These agreements are the measure of trade union interest in achieving the fullest co-operation with the Government for the full implementation of its programme for a socialist solution. Those of the agreements which meant a departure from established practice were not accepted with enthusiasm by the workers but as a necessary sacrifice for a solution of Britain's economic problem.

These various measures for solving the labour shortage brought an increase in the labour force of 25,407 men and boys (not including clerical workers) in the iron foundries during 1946. The number of women and girls employed shows a slight decrease of 276 over the same period. Immediate additional labour requirements are given as in the region of 5,000, and the total additional labour required eventually to man the foundries for full production is about 25,000.

Production results during 1946 increased 25 per cent., but what little enthusiasm there was in the foundries for the policy of the unions got a severe jolt in February last when frost and flood caused the breakdown in fuel and power supply, bringing considerable temporary unemployment and an equally considerable loss of production, as is brought out in the following figures showing tons of castings produced:—

		<i>Cast Iron</i>		<i>Cast Malleable Iron</i>
1st Quarter, 1946	...	549,620 tons	...	21,894 tons
4th Quarter, 1946	...	684,458 tons	...	25,040 tons
1st Quarter, 1947	...	602,356 tons	...	23,367 tons

Because of the breakdown of fuel and power, it cannot be ascertained if production would have been maintained in the first quarter of 1947, which was also the first quarter of the 44-hour working week; but taking the total figures, they do show how the foundry responded to the needs of the country and how the workers honoured the spirit of the union agreements.

The February crisis shows that, important as it is that the foundries produce the casting, there is no escaping the fact that coal comes first in the list of priorities. If coal is in short supply, the basic materials for the foundry (i.e. coal, cupola coke and pig iron) will also be in short supply. On the other hand, to modernise the mines there must be castings for mining machinery and equipment. Castings are no less essential for generating plant, plant and equipment for the gas undertakings, coal/oil conversion, and for locomotives and railway equipment generally.

The problem of material shortages in the foundry for the time being takes precedence over the labour shortage. Pig iron, scrap iron, coal and coke are in short supply. This all fits into the general picture of Britain's economic crisis and shows the need from the angle of the foundry for an over-all economic plan.

Whilst accepting the obligations implicit in this situation, the Annual Delegate Meeting of the Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers held recently in Ayr, laid down the pre-conditions essential for the planned production of castings. Recognising how closely related are the iron and steel foundries to iron and steel manufacture, nationalisation of the iron and steel industry was declared as no less urgent than mines nationalisation for a solution of material shortages.

Planning of the founding industry, itself within the framework of a planned engineering industry, can only succeed in the degree that there is complete co-ordination of the manual workers with the technical and administrative staffs and that out-dated procedure for dealing with disputes is replaced with a new relationship in which the workpeople are given a personal responsibility for the conduct and development of the industry. Promise of wage incentives for the undermanned industries must become reality, with special consideration for the unpleasant conditions in which the moulder (one of the earliest highly-skilled engineering craftsmen) and auxiliary workers produce the castings. These pre-conditions were viewed by the Foundry Workers' Delegates as related to an over-all plan, absence of which holds in check the enthusiasm of the workers who can and must bring increased production to a Britain in crisis.

The increasing gravity of Britain's economic crisis gives greater urgency to the production problem which must be solved if we are to be assured of a rising standard of living for the people of Britain. There is only one certain way of solving the problem and that is by translating the Government White Paper, "Economic Survey for 1947," into concrete planning which places the needs of the people before the questionable rights of Monopoly Interests.

DEMOCRACY OF A NEW TYPE

By EUGENE VARGA

ONE of the most important political results of the Second World War is the emergence of democratic states of a new type: Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia and, also, Albania. We understand by a "democracy of a new type" a state of affairs in a country where feudal remnants—large-scale landownership—have been eliminated, where the system of private ownership of the means of production still exists but large enterprises in the spheres of industry, transport and credit are in state hands, while the State itself and its apparatus of coercion serve not the interests of a monopolistic bourgeoisie but the interests of the working people in town and countryside.

The social structure of these States differs from all those hitherto known to us; it is something totally new in the history of mankind. It is neither a bourgeois dictatorship nor a proletarian dictatorship. The old State apparatus has not been smashed, as in the Soviet Union, but re-organised by means of a continuous inclusion in it of the supporters of the new regime. They are not capitalist States in the ordinary sense of the word. Neither, however, are they Socialist states. The basis for their transition to Socialism is given by the nationalisation of the most important means of production and by the essential character of the State. They may, with the maintenance of the present State apparatus, gradually pass over to Socialism, developing to an ever-increasing extent the socialist sector which already exists side by side with the simple commodity sector (peasant and artisan) and the capitalist sector, which has lost its dominant position.

The general historical pre-requisite, applying in all cases, for the emergence of these states of democracy of a new type is the general crisis of capitalism, which has very considerably intensified in consequence of the Second World War.

The historical conditions specific to these countries are:—

1. The discrediting of the ruling classes and their political parties in the eyes of the broad masses of the people, as a result of their policy of collaboration with Hitler fascism before and during the war, which led to the occupation of these countries by German troops and the fierce suppression and impoverishment of the working masses.

2. The leading role of the Communist parties in the resistance movement, as a result of which unity of the working class was achieved and a people's front formed for struggle against fascism, large-scale landownership and big capital—the economic basis of fascism.

3. The moral, diplomatic and economic support which these countries find in the Soviet Union. Without this support the states of democracy of a new type would be hard put to it to withstand the attacks of reaction, both external and internal. Very edifying in this respect is the fate of Greece.

The following features are characteristic of the *economy* of the states of a democracy of a new type:

Private ownership of the means of production continues to exist;

the peasant is the owner of his land, the artisan of his workshop, the trader of his shop, the small capitalist of his factory. Big enterprises, however, in mining, industry, transport and banking are nationalised and are under state management. There still exists the appropriation of surplus value, but it is restricted to a relatively narrow sphere*—not only because there is considerably less privately-owned capital but also because the trade unions and the State successfully protect the workers against the capitalists.

We would like, here, to stress the decisive significance of the special character of the State for the development of the economies of these countries. Where the State is controlled by monopoly capital and serves its interests it can own a very considerable part of the means of production without in the slightest degree altering the character of the social system. In Hitler Germany the railways, Imperial Bank, Discount Bank, Prussian State Bank, large industrial enterprises (e.g. Hermann Goering-Werke), power stations, agricultural and forest areas, etc., were the property of the Reich, individual lands or municipalities. The existence of such considerable public property, however, did not at all alter the fact that the economy of Hitler Germany remained a monopolistic economy and the social order a bourgeois one. The change in the character of the State—its transformation from a weapon of domination in the hands of the propertied classes into the state of the working people—this is what determines the real significance of the transfer of a decisive part of the means of production into the hands of the State in the countries of a democracy of a new type.

The change in the character of the State explains also why the influence of nationalisation on the distribution of the national revenue is totally different in the democratic States of a new type from that in the bourgeois-democratic countries such as Great Britain.

Nationalisation in the new democratic States signifies a special sort of economic revolution. The property of traitors to the country, of fascist capitalists, was confiscated without compensation. Other big capitalists received compensation, but their income after compensation was only a small part of the surplus value which they previously appropriated.†

The contradictions between the social character of production and the private character of appropriation have sharpened to such a degree as the result of the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism that in the post-war period the wave of nationalisation has embraced almost all

*The bourgeoisie, nevertheless, which still almost entirely dominates in the sphere of trade, receives large profits, thanks to the sale of the commodities of the socialised enterprises; withal it frequently enjoys the support of former officials who have remained in the State apparatus.

†Difficulties arose in connection with the fact that British and American capitalists were partners in numerous enterprises taken over by the State. Many capitalists, who have fled abroad, are rapidly becoming American citizens and demanding, with the support of the authorities of their new "motherland," full compensation or the return of their enterprises.

countries with fully-developed capitalist relations, with the exception of the U.S.A. Nationalisation in these countries is an attempt to solve the contradictions between the social character of production and the private character of appropriation within the framework of the bourgeois social system. It is precisely this which explains the introduction of nationalisation with full compensation for the capitalists. Thus in Britain, for example, the share-holders of electricity companies were given compensation to the amount of £450,000,000 sterling. This sum was calculated on the basis of the Stock Exchange value of the shares before nationalisation. Similarly, compensation amounting to £1,035,000,000 was fixed for owners of transport enterprises due to be nationalised. This means that the shareholders were not harmed. The distribution of the national income remains almost unchanged.*

These various methods of carrying out nationalisation show the difference between a bourgeois democracy and a democracy of the new type.

The economic importance of the nationalisation of big industrial enterprises naturally differs very greatly in various countries of democracy of a new type. In countries where agriculture predominates and where industrial development is inconsiderable—Bulgaria and Yugoslavia—its importance is relatively less. In Poland, which has a big coal mining and heavy industry, the importance of nationalisation is far greater, the more so as it extends also to industrial enterprises of medium size. In Czechoslovakia, which is much more highly developed industrially, and where industry was expanded by the Germans during the war, nationalisation plays the greatest role, despite the fact that in this country it embraces a smaller number of medium enterprises than in Poland. While industry in Yugoslavia and pre-war Poland was almost completely destroyed during the war, the industry of Czechoslovakia suffered extremely little from military operations. The fact that in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia it was not necessary to nationalise so many individual plants does not detract from the importance of this measure for the future economic development of these countries, which are being transformed from agrarian appendages of Germany, as they were before the war, into independent agrarian-industrial countries.

The second important feature of the economies of the countries of democracy of a new type is the complete and final elimination of large-scale landlordism, of this feudal survival inside the capitalist system of economy. The social and political power of the big landowners, dating back a thousand years, has been destroyed. The big landed properties were confiscated by the State and distributed among peasants having little land and landless agricultural labourers. The

*Nevertheless, bourgeois nationalisation also signifies progress in the direction of the new type of democracy.

number of peasant households (i.e. private owners of land) increased very considerably in these countries.

The division of the lands among many hundreds of thousands of peasants who had little or no land has converted the overwhelming majority of these peasants into loyal supporters of the new regime. The mistake made by the Hungarian Communists in 1919, when they wanted to leap over an essential historical stage by converting the confiscated large landed properties into state farms, instead of dividing them up among the peasants and so satisfying the land hunger, has nowhere been repeated.

The cultivation of land by the peasants using their own resources and giving them the opportunity of selling their produce on the market (in some countries only after fulfilling tax payments and deliveries to the State) make possible the preservation or re-emergence of commodity capitalist relations in the economy of the country. As Lenin pointed out "small-scale production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously and on a mass scale."*

Thus, the social order in the States of democracy of a new type is not a socialist order, but a peculiar, new, transitional form. The contradiction between the productive forces and relations of production becomes mitigated in proportion as the relative weight of the socialist sector increases.

The nationalisation of the land of big landowners and its distribution among the peasants had a different significance in different countries. In peasant countries like Bulgaria and old Serbia there existed no large-scale land ownership in the proper sense of the word. Only a relatively small amount of land could be distributed among the peasants there. In other parts of Yugoslavia, previously belonging to Hungary, e.g. in Croatia and the Banat, considerably more land could be distributed. In Czechoslovakia an agrarian reform was carried out already after the first World War: here the estates, first and foremost of expelled Germans, were distributed among the peasants.

In Poland the agrarian reform is of decisive importance for the political development of the country. Here the position of the peasantry was at its worst. "*Polonia infernum rusticorum*"—"Poland is the peasant's hell" was said of it already some hundreds of years ago. Here landownership of the feudal type was retained in its entirety, both on the territory of pre-war Poland and in the Western districts which were previously under German domination. The elimination of landlordism opens up a new era in the economic and political life of Poland.

It is quite clear that the class of big landowners by no means intends to accept these changes peacefully but is resisting the new regime in every way. Nationalisation of the land does not mean that

*Lenin, Selected Works X., p.60.

the big landowners immediately lose their political influence. True, some of them fled abroad, but many remained inside the country. A considerable part of their property was in the form of valuables, works of art, furniture, houses, which remained in their hands. In many cases the former big landowners, e.g. in Poland, succeeded in penetrating into the State apparatus, above all into the agricultural administration, and in sabotaging the carrying out of the agrarian reform. More important still is the fact that there remained in the country a stratum of people enjoying some influence, whose existence wholly or partially depended on the big landowners. Among these are the rural clergy, notaries, judges and teachers, who regularly received money, food, firewood, etc., from the landowners; various estate employees, agronomists and other persons who were in the service of the landlord; State officials, judges, officers, who obtained their posts through the influence of the landlord; deputies elected by the population at his behest. In short, the elimination of the economic basis of the power of the agrarians does not signify simultaneous destruction of their political influence inside the country.

The same can be said of the big bourgeoisie. Although their enterprises were nationalised, in the majority of cases considerable personal property still remained in their hands. A large part of the former managers, leading engineers and other persons in the service of this bourgeoisie remained in the nationalised enterprises. To this day, persons sponsored by the big bourgeoisie are to be found in the State apparatus and the various economic organisations—Chambers of Commerce and so forth—which continue to exist. The representatives of the big bourgeoisie have close contacts with the middle bourgeoisie, whose enterprises have not been expropriated. Since the nationalisation of their enterprises they have not yet completely lost their influence.

Here too the general rule that changes in the economic basis do not immediately evoke corresponding changes in politics continues to operate. Deprived of their economic power, the landlords together with the expropriated and unexpropriated capitalists and their adherents fight with every means at their disposal against the new democratic regime, organise oppositional political parties and through priests, teachers and notaries already debauched by them conduct agitation among the new peasants (who often lack the necessary means of production) for giving back land to the landlords. They frighten the peasants by telling them they will be hanged in the event of the old system being restored, because they “stole” the land. They organise plots against the government, arm bandits, etc. They seek and find active support in reactionary circles abroad.

The big bourgeoisie, still to a degree playing a dominant part in home and foreign trade,* struggles against the new regime in the

*The co-operative bodies are still not sufficiently strong to squeeze out private capital in the circulation of commodities, and in many cases they are tied still to the capitalists.

economic sphere as well, attempting to plunder the State and discredit the social system. With the help of accomplices bribed by them in the State enterprises and the State apparatus they often obtain commodities at less than cost price, hide them, send them to foreign countries or sell them inside the country exclusively in exchange for gold or foreign currency. The representatives of the big bourgeoisie try to cause inflation or increase the existing inflation, thereby to provoke dissatisfaction among the working people and turn them against the new regime.

In a word, it is by no means a peaceful idyll that reigns in the countries of new democracy but, on the contrary, a sharp, extremely fierce class struggle that is in progress, just as in the old capitalist countries.

As regards the class struggle, however, there exists a difference in principle between the States of democracy of a new type and the old bourgeois countries. In the old bourgeois countries the State is a weapon of domination in the hands of the propertied classes. The entire State apparatus—officials, judges, police and as a last resort, the standing army—is on the side of the propertied classes.*

The opposite is to be seen in the countries of new democracy. Here the State protects the interests of the working people against those who live by appropriating surplus value. When conflicts arise the armed forces of the State are to be found, not on the side of the capitalists, but on the side of the workers. It is wholly inconceivable that the armies of these States should be used against the working people. State officials and judges serve the interests of the working people.

This distinction vividly demonstrates the fact that power is in the hands of the people—the new character of the States in the countries indicated. The State influences the economic life of the country far more and in a different direction than in the old bourgeois countries, though there too the economic functions of the State have greatly extended as compared with the pre-war period. In the countries of democracy of a new type, however, the trend of economic policy is different in principle. In the capitalist countries the economic policy of the State serves the interests of maintaining the existing social order in general and the interests of monopoly capital in particular.

In the States of democracy of a new type economic policy is directed to strengthening and developing the socialised sector of economy, accelerating economic development, improving the position

*This does not, of course, prevent the organs of the bourgeois State in certain cases settling wage disputes between capitalists and workers in favour of the latter. This, however, never happens should it threaten the foundations of the bourgeois social system—private ownership of the means of production. The passage of social legislation—the shorter working day, health insurance, unemployment benefits—can be explained by the well-understood interests of the bourgeoisie.

of the working people, establishing a fair distribution of income in accordance with services rendered to society. To raise the standard of life of the whole people requires an increased output of production. The economic policy, therefore, aims at the utmost development of the productive forces and the elimination of restrictions on their development caused under capitalism by the scramble for profits.

To realise these aims, the States of democracy of a new type seek to influence the development of economy in a planned way. Economic plans calculated over several years have been drawn up.

It is obvious that there can be no planned economy, as understood in the U.S.S.R., in these countries. It is impossible owing to the presence of private ownership of the means of production. Genuine planned economy is possible only under Socialism, when all the means of production are nationalised.

However, nationalisation of the decisive enterprises in mining, industry, transport and credit gives the States of new democracy far greater possibility, than in the case of the States of monopoly capital, to influence by means of planning the economic activity of individual small private producers, the more so because the planned influence of the State is in the interests of the overwhelming majority of these small private producers, primarily the peasantry, and is not against their interests. Undoubtedly, this influence will increase as the countries of new democracy become more industrialised. All these facts show that the planned influence of the State on the economy of the countries of new democracy is sufficiently effective not only to be an obstacle to their reconversion into capitalist social systems of the old type, but also to encourage the development of these countries in the direction of Socialism. Not only does the general line of historical development push them along this road, but also concrete practical needs.

Thus, for example, many former agricultural workers have been given land but do not possess the means of production, tractive power and implements, with which to cultivate it. The means of production of the big estates—tractors, steam-ploughs, etc.—distributed among the peasants are unsuitable for cultivating small peasant plots. The new rural proprietors, lacking the means of production, are threatened by the danger of becoming economically dependent on the prosperous peasants who, for money, or part of the harvest or labour, will cultivate their lands.

The practical needs of the peasants who possess land but not the means of production, urge them, therefore, towards joint cultivation of the land, in order to make use of the existing means of production which can only be used to advantage on a big farm. Various forms of artels have arisen. In a number of artels the peasants jointly plough and cultivate the land. After this the boundaries of the individual plots are re-established and each peasant gathers the harvest on his own field.

In Bulgaria, where old traditions of cultivating the land on a

co-operative basis exist, co-operatives for joint cultivation of the land have been formed on a voluntary basis. All the land of the members of the co-operative (which often includes all the peasants of a village) is cultivated jointly and the harvesting is also done jointly. But the harvest is distributed not according to the purely Socialist principle of the number of days worked: besides the number of days worked, account is also taken of the size of the land which the peasant put at the disposal of the co-operative and also the amount of the means of production put in. Hence, this is a compromise between the Socialist principle and one based on private ownership of the means of production. It is a solution of the problem which corresponds to the transitional character of the social system.

By giving support to this new type of agricultural co-operative in the form of credits, tractors and seed, etc., the Government encourages its development and extension and influences the development of economy in a progressive direction.

(To be continued).

The United States Today (iii)

THE NEGRO PEOPLE

By BETTY WALLACE

LYNCHINGS, on the increase in the United States—more than forty negro *war veterans* alone lynched between V.J. Day and April of this year—have shocked people, as evidence of certain aspects of the Jim Crow* policy. The recent lynching of Willie Earle in Greenville, South Carolina, where an all-white jury acquitted twenty-six men who had signed statements admitting taking part in the lynching, caused a nation-wide sensation—not so much because of the acquittal but because this is one of the first instances of lynchers ever being brought to trial.

By 1940 out of a total U.S. population of 132 millions there were twelve and a half million negroes, of whom two-thirds still live in the south and nearly five million in the “Black Belt” from Virginia and the Carolinas to the States of the lower Mississippi. In these States negroes often number more than 50 per cent. of the population. Give the negro full democratic rights, education, voting facilities and so on, *and these States will become largely led by the negro people themselves.*

But just in these areas the great sell-out of the negro population occurred. Freedom from slavery turned out to be another form of

* Jim Crow policy is the policy of complete segregation of the negro population from the white population in all social, political and economic activity.

economic servitude. The vast majority of the negroes still live as "share-croppers," and the peon-farms** of today coincide with the slave plantations of yesterday. The negro share-cropper, in debt year after year to his landlord, has no civil rights.

Inevitably the semi-feudal system of agriculture in the south is uneconomic. Technique is the same as a hundred years ago; labour standards are the lowest in the country, dragging down the whole of the south, which in turn drags down the labour standards of the country as a whole. During the first World War, and again in the second, a trek to the northern war industries left the average negro in the north a little better off. Figures from north and south indicate the status of the negro today. The Federal Office of Education shows that in ten southern States the value of school land, buildings and equipment was \$183 per white child and \$36 per negro child; the average expectation of life today in the States is 66 years for a white American, 57 for a negro; the negro infant death rate is 63 per cent. higher than for white children; there are 3,800 negro doctors, or one for every 3,377 negroes, as opposed to one doctor for every 750 white Americans; in the last decade the number of negroes increased 8 per cent., the number of negro doctors decreased by 5 per cent.; 12 per cent. of all negro children aged 14—15 years are working compared with 3 per cent. of white children of the same age group. It is common knowledge that the majority of negroes are still debarred from voting by the poll tax and other devices, that segregation is still the overall policy throughout the States, that in many cities there are separate rail coaches for white and negro, that hotels and restaurants refuse negro customers, and so on.

The whole position is the outcome of the history of the negro people in the United States. But in no field today is the issue more clearly raised than in the status of the negro veteran. 1,154,000 negro war veterans have returned home, more than 75 per cent. to the south, yet every effort is still made to do them out of their rights. Of 100,000 negro veterans who have registered for educational benefits only 20,000 have been registered in colleges; banks and mortgage institutions refuse loans to negro veterans, making the housing provisions of the G.I. Bill ineffective; in one southern State there are 1,700 veterans employed in the administration, but only seven are negroes; and again, a sum of over 250 million dollars is involved in payments due to negro veterans who served abroad for leave missed as a result. Various technical means are being found to prevent the 700,000 southern negroes from obtaining these sums due to them. Finally, President Roosevelt's Fair Employment Practices Committee, formed in June, 1941, to work against discriminatory practices in war industries, was abolished on 30th June, 1946. As a result it is every-

** Under the peon system negro labour is compulsorily held until debts owing to the landlord are paid off, which virtually means never.

where negro men and women in industry who are the first to be thrown out of work with the post-war contraction of employment.

Today the policy of racial discrimination is a permanent weapon in the arsenal of American reaction. The south will continue to vote for the Democratic Party almost solidly, as a result of historical circumstances, but the southern Democrats have nothing in common with the progressive policies associated with the Democratic Party under President Roosevelt. Racial discrimination is used to rally the "poor whites" of the south behind the ruling class. Moreover since the 1914-18 war the northern industrialists have invaded the south, which is slowly becoming industrialised. These inter-locking interests of reaction, cutting across the party lines of Democrat and Republican, use one-tenth of the nation—the negro people—as a major weapon in their present reactionary offensive.

Fortunately there are signs that the labour and progressive movement is not being swept away by the offensive. A number of unions, including some inside the A.F.L., are adopting a more liberal policy to negro membership; negro veterans' organisations are also gathering strength. The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured Peoples and the National Negro Congress, both with long histories of courageous activities, are active. The National Negro Congress, on June 6th, 1946, on behalf of the negro people, addressed a petition to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, asking for "the elimination of political, economic and social discrimination" and stating that in the U.S.A. they had "failed to find relief from oppression through constitutional appeal—which we have sought for almost a century since emancipation."

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CAUCASUS WEEK—II

by J. TODD and D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

14TH SEPT. After the friendliest of farewells we flew from Tiflis to Erevan, high over the Caucasus tops, passing over the vast lake of Sevan, which with its volume and height has already begun to be the source of immense hydro-electric power for the growing industries of Armenia. We arrived over Erevan at such a height that it took a quarter of an hour to spiral down.

The dominating feature of the landscape, which caught our eyes as soon as we stepped from the plane, was Mount Ararat (over 15,000 feet), towering snow-capped to the south, with its companion height, Mount Alagez (over 12,000 feet), to the north. Ararat, we were later to find, appears in nearly every Armenian painting, so strongly is it imprinted in Armenian minds as the symbol of their country. Perhaps its most famous pictorial representation is in the state crest of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, for, by an irony of fate (polite term for Turkish rapacity and Allied Bolshevik-fencing after 1918), Mount Ararat is not at the moment on Armenian soil. At a post-1918-war peace conference, when the Turkish Ambassador pointed this out, Chicherin, then People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, replied that he saw no relevance in the complaint, since the Turkish crest included the moon and stars, which were far less likely ever to come under Turkish sovereignty than Ararat was to become Armenian.

This capital of a little Republic of 1,500,000 people, about half the Armenians of the world, built in an earthquake area where Sir John Vanbrugh would have been out of business, for it is not possible to erect any large or heavy buildings, is a lively modern city, with some attractive modern buildings in an architecture mainly European, with traditional Armenian features introduced in a very effective blend. Much of it is built in tufa, a pinkish stone of volcanic origin, which in the setting sun develops a beautiful rosy glow. The decoration usually includes formalised carvings of grapes and pomegranates, a motif which we were later to see repeated on the historic ruins of buildings over a thousand years old. (The pre-revolutionary town, huddled in a corner on a hill, looks like a bunch of squalid medieval huts).

The Armenians have a tragic and interesting history, and naturally enough a well-developed national consciousness. I found them most sympathetic and stimulating, and one piece of bare statistics tells one more of what they have suffered by Turkish massacres than a page of explanation: 90 per cent. of today's population is at school.

Almost the first thing we did on arrival was to visit a girls' secondary school. It made a very good impression; the buildings were better than fair, but the teachers and pupils were first-class. They were friendly, not merely to us but to one another; the pupils were clean and tidy, alert and happy and unselfconscious. We found a small

group of tenth-year girls—i.e. about 17—obviously thrilled to be doing practical work in a laboratory under a youngish male teacher only just demobilised from the Red Army and covered with medals. (Armenians fought particularly well in the war and suffered heavy casualties.) And at the other end of the scale little first-year girls, in the first fortnight of their school life, happy and at ease, singing songs about working hard to please Comrade Stalin—no doubt to convince Mr. Winterton that they form part of a slave state under an iron dictatorship. (The best teachers are put to teach the first-year children, as the first year is held to be the most difficult, and first impressions the most important.)

At this school we had our first contact with the children of repatriated Armenians, of whom much more will be told below. They were girls of various ages from Bulgaria, Rumania, Syria, Lebanon and other countries, who had arrived in Soviet Armenia from the outer world in the last few months. They spoke Armenian, of course, but in general were backward in comparison to the indigenous children. They were being helped to catch up, not merely by the teachers but also by their fellow pupils; and those of them we saw seemed very happy.

The average size of class was 40 in the younger years, and 30 in the later; naturally, as we do, they want to make them smaller, but are short of trained teachers and of accommodation, and they have plenty of children to cope with, for as already stated the percentage of children in the population is very high. We thought the school gave us a good opportunity to ask one of the stock English questions: "As you teach no religion, what do you do to give an ethical basis to the education?" The answer was: "We inculcate directly and indirectly a love of work, love of parents, of the country, of the people, and of nature. That is surely ethical grounding enough."

Two human touches: 1. Old pupils often visit the school, and bring their husbands and children, and there is a book for them to write their post-school history. 2. As we were leaving, the director, a pleasant middle-aged woman, showed signs of anxiety for a moment, and then, noticing a bouquet of flowers in a vase on her desk, looked greatly relieved and wrapped them up and handed them to Miss T., saying: "An Armenian cannot let a visitor leave her house without flowers."

We next saw a big collection of rare and beautiful old Armenian manuscript books, with rich illuminations. They were cooped up in a few borrowed rooms in a museum, but a fireproof house is being built for them in the new government and cultural and educational quarter of the city. Here and everywhere tremendous building activity is going forward.

We had in the afternoon a sample of what might have been a dust storm: it kept trying to be a dust storm but always failed; the city, although over 3,000 feet above the sea, lies in a great basin, and

the high and rather barren hills around it used to send down terrible dust storms. Afforestation has greatly reduced the nuisance by creating an "artificial climate," as Academician Alabyan, the rebuilder of Stalingrad and himself an Armenian, phrased it to us.

In the evening we went to the Opera, a simple but truly magnificent modern building which is ultimately to have two stages, back to back, and two auditoriums of course, but at the moment is complete by being half-complete. As this was the opening of the season the proceedings began with the playing of the Armenian national anthem, composed by Aram Khachaturian, some of whose orchestral works have recently become well known in Britain. The opera was Armenian; the orchestra, singing, setting and dresses were up to Moscow standard—this in a country of half the population of Wales. There was the usual complete mixture of public; old and young, workers and intellectuals, ill-dressed and well-dressed, a fair cross-section. One was forced to conclude that the only reason for going to the opera was that they wanted to hear opera. The tickets must take quite a slice out of smaller incomes; two students, we noticed, reduced the expense by sharing one small seat. We visited the opera again on the following evening, seeing another Armenian opera. Very gay and tuneful, it had been written many decades ago in Stamboul by an Armenian and suppressed by the Turkish censorship. When the score was found long afterwards and brought to Armenia, it still bore the censor's marks.

15th Sept. We drove to the famous ruin of Zwartnotz, on our way to visit the vineyards of Sovkhoz (State Farm) No. 3 of the Ararat Wine Trust—like driving past Fountains Abbey on the way to a distillery or barley fields. We passed through several quite sturdy stone villages, half in ruins as a result of earthquakes, mostly being rebuilt on other sites. We also saw many solid square stone cottages which were being built to house repatriates working on the collective or state farms; they were being largely erected by German prisoners. Zwartnotz is a very early Christian Church of great size and beauty, built in the Seventh Century and fallen into ruin—possibly by earthquakes or possibly by faulty construction—only three centuries later. What still remains is being well looked after in a fashion that reminds one very much of Fountains or Jervaulx. Some of the stone carving is superb.

The Sovkhoz No. 3, even as seen before one sampled its products, was pretty efficient. It was Armenia's earliest Sovkhoz, having started in 1920 with 8 hectares (20 acres) of desert—easily reclaimable by irrigation, of course, in that fairly good soil and admirable climate. By 1945 it had grown to 594 hectares of grapes and fruit, and in 1946 the fruit—275 hectares—was made into a separate farm, leaving a grape farm of 315 hectares. They aim to add another 75 hectares of grapes in the Fourth Five Year Plan, and already have 4 hectares of seedlings ready for this extension. This farm is constantly at work

on new varieties, having produced 36 already. It does much of this development work to supplement the labours of the Institute for Grape Cultivation, which also has vineyards of its own. The farm produces wine for its own grapes, and markets also its fresh grapes.

An examination of the basis of disposal of the produce gives an idea of the economy of this form of cultivation. The current year's plan was for 1,200 tons of grapes; of this 80 per cent. goes into wine and is sold to Ararat at a "plan" cost which is fairly low, representing in effect the farm's contribution to the state, since of course no rent is paid. The farm is free to deal with the remaining 25 per cent. as it thinks fit. Wine is sold at cost price to the workers on the farm—in wine or grapes or raisins as the case may be—and some is sold in the open market for a good price. The proceeds of these sales go into all sorts of improvements, welfare, etc. (not into capital improvement, which is covered by bank loans). If the planned production is exceeded, Ararat still takes 80 per cent. of the total production, but pays more for anything in excess of the planned quantity. I was interested to know whether such a farm would be top-heavy with administrative or clerical staff; the answer was that all the administrative workers—managers, agronomists, teachers, engineers, clerks, cashiers—were 30, and the productive workers 250.

The workers have an 8-hour day and a 6-day week, and are paid by progressive piece-work rates; overtime is avoided as far as possible, but if worked it is paid for the first two hours at time-and-a-half, and then at double. They have the full range of social services, like factory workers, 100 per cent. trade union membership, and 18 working-days holiday—meaning in effect 3 weeks—with pay each year. Their houses are owned by the farm, and the average rent is about 2 per cent. of their earnings. Both administrative and productive workers also have individual plots of about $\frac{2}{5}$ ths of an acre, and most of them keep a cow (as do the steel-workers of Magnitogorsk). We had our talk with one of the managers in a passable theatre and club building built actually during the war; the club has a dance ensemble of its own, and films or concerts from Erevan five times a month. On this farm, too, there were a number of repatriates working. We sampled some of the wine, and large quantities of the grapes.

The 16th September was a busy day, mainly taken up with the Committee on Repatriation of Armenians and with visiting repatriates. We also visited the famous church of Echmiadzin, the Rome of the Armenian churches, and had a long interview with the Katholikos, the head of the church. He proved to be a simple and friendly man of considerable culture, a composer of music as well as a shrewd and vigorous ecclesiastical politician, determined both to maintain the strength and prestige of his church and to advance the cause of United Armenia—meaning thereby the policy of persuading the powers to secure the return to Armenia of the territory now in the Turkish empire

which is historically Armenian and is inhabited by 120,000 Armenians, living incidentally in great poverty. He told us a great deal of the difficulties his church had experienced in the early days of the Soviet Union, mainly owing to the belief that it was as counter-revolutionary as most of the Orthodox Church; but he also told us how happily his church now got on with both the Armenian Republic and the U.S.S.R. and of his rights not merely to church self-government but to the establishment of an academy for the training of priests, and to their own printing-press.

The day was nearly done. All that remained was a very pleasant reception and banquet, and on the following day we ended our Caucasus week with regret and flew high over the mountains to a different scene in Stalingrad.

[The first instalment (Georgia) of this travel diary appeared in the April issue.]

THE MARSHALL "PLAN"

(Continued from page 232)

State Clayton had arrived in London, and the *Times* published a message from its Washington correspondent explaining that this "obviously has been timed to make him available for direct consultation there when the Soviet reply to the Anglo-French communication on the subject of the Marshall plan is received." And, in fact, when that reply was received suggesting June 27 for the three-Power meeting, Attlee, Bevin, Dalton and Cripps held a series of meetings with Clayton on the Marshall "plan"—meetings that occupied the greater part of three days (*Times*, June 25, 26, and 27, 1947). When Mr. Bevin left for Paris again, on June 27, a clear demonstration of the line-up of the United States, Britain and France, before ever the Soviet Union was taken into consultation, had been given the whole world.

Even the concrete proposals presented to Molotov on June 27 showed how carefully the cards had been stacked beforehand. Already, in his revealing report on June 7, the *Times* parliamentary correspondent had stated that the outline "emerging" from Anglo-American talks was (i) a conference of European powers, (ii) an assessment of Europe's needs for heavy equipment and agricultural engineering, to be bought from the U.S.A. with dollar credit, (iii) the creation of "an organisation charged with the responsibility of allocation . . . to the various countries in accordance with their needs," (iv) the European Coal Organisation was a suitable model. In his speech on June 13, Bevin had indicated that "we must proceed, so far as Europe is concerned, on a functional basis, with problems of coal, food and transport." On June 17 the *Times* Paris correspondent reported that under the French scheme—which, he revealed, the French Ambassador in Washington had already been discussing with Marshall

—a series of “international expert committees” should draw up a balance sheet of resources and needs for each country in four fields (i) iron and steel, (ii) coal, (iii) transport, (iv) agriculture: a scheme similar to that which “emerged” from Anglo-American talks, as we have seen, by June 7. By June 23 the Paris correspondent of the *Times* was able to add to the French scheme the missing link of “a steering committee” to “regulate and co-ordinate” the procedure of the expert committees (24/6/47)—corresponding to the earlier Anglo-American scheme of “an organisation charged with the responsibility of allocation.” Two days before Bevin, Bidault and Molotov met in Paris, the *News Chronicle* diplomatic correspondent wrote that the British scheme, too, was for (i) a number of committees—“coal, food, transport, steel and so on,” (ii) a steering committee to co-ordinate their findings (26/6/47).

It was in vain, therefore, that the *Times* special correspondent in Paris (27/6/47) wrote on the eve of the opening of the talks that:

No conference in recent years has been harder to assess or prejudge. No conference has been looser in organisation . . . There was no attempt to collate the British and French suggestions when Mr. Bevin came to Paris 10 days ago . . . Neither the British nor the French Governments have any precise plan even now.

On the contrary, no conference had been more efficiently prepared and prejudged: at no time had Franco-British proposals been so effectively collated: they had never had more precise plans.

This prefabrication of the Anglo-French-American proposals, and the ludicrous efforts of official British propaganda to disguise the fact that they were so prefabricated, are most significant, as we shall see. They give the key to the real reason for the failure of the Paris talks.

What, then, was revealed by the Paris discussions? It was precisely what followed from the Truman, Acheson and Marshall speeches reviewed above: that what was at stake was the economic independence of the Soviet Union and the countries which have broken the power of monopoly capital and begun to plan their own independent economies. The Anglo-French proposal was to treat Europe as an economic whole: to investigate what was needed to ensure the development of *Europe's* “key industries,” and in particular, what equipment was needed “to ensure the development of production and staple consumption products ‘requisite to assure’ the economic life of Europe”; and to have a steering committee to draw up a report on these lines by September 1. Of course, all the information was to be supplied voluntarily, membership was to be voluntary, and there was to be no violation of national sovereignty. But the fact remained that the reports of the various sub-committees were to be drawn up, not on the basis of the *national* requirements of each people for the development and, if it thought fit, readjustment of its economy, but to suit the needs of “Europe.” And what is “Europe”? It was to be *the particular distribution of productive forces as they stood before the war*: a distribution in which the western countries—

Britain, France, Germany, Holland, Italy—were industrialised countries with colonial Empires, a number of lesser countries—Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway—were dependent to a high degree on absorption by the western countries for their specialised products and services, while the countries of Eastern Europe were backward, impoverished agrarian countries, entirely dependent upon the stronger Powers, and a prey to political reaction in its worst form.

To make matters quite clear, the British and French Governments let it be understood that the restoration of German industrial resources was also part of this scheme. This was no surprise: as early as May, 8, Acheson had declared that one of the main aims of American policy must be:

To push ahead with the reconstruction of those two great workshops of Europe and Asia—Germany and Japan—upon which the ultimate recovery of the two Continents so largely depends . . . European recovery cannot be complete until the various parts of Europe's economy are working together in a harmonious whole. And the achievement of a co-ordinated European economy remains a fundamental objective of our foreign policy. (*Times*, 9/5/47).

This was by no means the only indication that the aim of the new European planners is to have “a co-ordinated European economy” so largely dependent on German industry. But what did that economy look like when it existed? There is a mass of evidence on this question buried in the reports of the Economic, Financial and Raw Materials Committees of the League of Nations in 1936—1939. It was a state of affairs in which the countries of Eastern Europe, having no independent industrial basis of their own, and relying for their existence entirely on the export of their agricultural produce, were falling more and more completely under the economic domination of Germany.

The whole basis of the Anglo-French-American plans put forward at Paris was to break down the framework of planned industrial and agricultural development under popular control, which the countries of eastern Europe are developing—and to do this in the name of Europe as a whole—a “co-ordinated European economy.” To concentrate on coal mining, iron and steel output, engineering and transport equipment, raw materials production *where they existed before*—in the name of solving Europe's urgent needs: that is the whole essence of the Bevin—Marshall scheme, and it would spell ruin and misery for the east European peoples once again, with an end to their Socialist hopes. Yet the Anglo-French communique published on the conclusion of the Bevin—Bidault talks (*Times*, 19/6/47) itself said explicitly that the European countries must “make the maximum effort *to develop once more the resources which in the main they produced for themselves before the war.*”

That it was “voluntary” for countries to accept the scheme was mere playing with words: American and British spokesmen, as we have seen, made perfectly clear that they would get nothing if they didn't abandon “totalitarian” i.e., Socialist methods of running their coun-

tries, and accept a "more characteristically European pattern." And on June 27 itself the bulletin of the American Embassy in Paris had declared that the European nations accepting the Marshall scheme must "pool their resources, destroy economic barriers, and estimate their needs on a continental basis."

As against this, the Soviet Union put forward a plain, consistent and truly internationalist proposal—that the programmes of economic aid required from America should be estimated in the first instance by the European countries themselves: that a summary should be drawn up on the basis of these estimates, bearing in mind particularly the needs of the countries which suffered from German aggression; that a committee of the three Powers with some other European States, after doing this work, should ascertain from the U.S.A. what "appropriate economic aid" it could grant: and that the question of German resources should be examined by the four Great Powers. Molotov underlined, in his closing speech at the Paris talks (2/7/47):

The Soviet Union is in favour of the utmost economic co-operation among the European and other countries on the healthy basis of equal and mutual respect of national interests, and has itself always assisted and will assist this by means of extending trade with other States.

But this basis was not enough for Mr. Bevin. He knew, he said, that the United States wanted more. America wanted reports (on which it would base its aid) showing "what European countries were doing to increase production and how far European countries could increase that production by voluntary co-operation." When challenged by Molotov as to how he knew this, Bevin said, in grotesque defiance of the facts set forth earlier about Anglo-American discussions—that "he knew nothing more about American intentions than Mr. Molotov did, but that he had closely studied Mr. Marshall's offer." (*Times*, 1/7/47).

And so the Paris talks ended in disagreement; whereupon events began to show rapidly where the truth lay. "Credits for Britain, for France, for all of Europe—yes, if the money is used to hold the tide again Communism. But to help Russia—not this Congress: not a nickel, not a cent" wrote the *Daily Mail* correspondent from New York (2/7/47). "It would be absurd to deny that if the Soviet Union had been ranged among the beneficiaries there would have been some trouble in Congress" wrote the more staid and cautious *Times* Correspondent from Washington (4/7/47), to which the leading article added, with magnificent understatement, "In its present mood Congress, no matter what the Administration may desire, would have been less eager to grant credits to countries in which Communism is dominant." The New York financial correspondent of the *Times* (7/7/47), after declaring that "the American people are less than dejected by the Russian refusal," said it was the same with Congress. "By all accounts, since Russia abandoned the conference at Paris the chances have become greater than ever that Congress will give strong approval to the Marshall plan."

On July 14, at Salt Lake City, Marshall gave a still more authoritative confirmation of the real purposes of his "plan," in a speech to the Annual Conference of State Governors. He spoke of "the incalculable stake which this country has in the preservation of European civilisation"—it being well understood, as we have seen already, that on the lips of an American politician "European" means "capitalist." Marshall also told the Governors that either America must assist "its traditional friends among the nations of the Old World . . . or it must reconcile itself to seeing them move in directions which are consistent neither with their own traditions nor with those of this country" (*Times*, 16/7/47). The *Times* Washington Correspondent, in reporting the speech, said cryptically that "there was some evidence to show that the whole address had been subject to study and revision almost to the moment of its delivery"—in plain language, that the speech as pronounced by Marshall differed from the printed text distributed to the press. He added that, in a private session, the Secretary of State told the governors "frankly" what he had implied. Luckily the agencies had circulated, and the *News Chronicle* had published the day before, some of the *original* text of the speech; and from this we learn that Marshall had incautiously blurted out that the alternative to American help might be "to throw the war-torn nations into the arms of Communism."

What Marshall now felt no longer worth concealing also was that the Paris Conference was intended "to overcome the limitation of national barriers"—barriers which, as is well known, have in no way hindered trade agreements between the countries of eastern and western Europe, but have enabled the weaker countries in the east to begin reconstructing their economies on a new basis. So open was the change, once the Soviet Union and the new democracies were out of the way, that it is not surprising to find anxiety creeping in even among the smaller countries of western and northern Europe who accepted the invitations which the British and French governments sent out on July 3rd.

Most inconsiderately, after all the profuse assurances of Messrs. Bevin and Bidault, Switzerland only agreed to attend with the reservation "that it will not assume any obligations inconsistent with her traditional status of neutrality," and that it reserved the right "to make trade agreements with those States which are not taking part in the Conference." The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Swedish Parliament on July 8 recommended acceptance of the invitation, "provided Sweden does not bind herself to any measure that would involve her in a western bloc or influence her foreign policy." On the same day the Norwegian Parliament in secret session made the same reservations, with the addition that it would not "permit infiltration into Norway's economic life."

Yet another aspect of the Marshall scheme for promoting an economic agreement of Western Europe began to emerge directly the U.S.S.R. was out of the way: the plans for reconstructing German

heavy industry. On July 9th the United States Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Harriman, assured the chief Burgomaster of Essen that he was impressed by his plea for a revision of the order to dismantle the Krupp works, and that the British and Americans would leave "sufficient industries" in Western Germany to pay for food imports. On July 12th the American Military Governor and British Deputy Military Governor reached agreement for the raising of the permitted level of steel production from $7\frac{1}{2}$ million tons a year for the *whole* of Germany, fixed in March, 1946, to "somewhat below 12 million tons" for the combined Western Zone *alone* (*Times*, 14/7/47). As a result of this agreement, new levels were also agreed upon for other branches of industry, and the list of works to be destroyed or dismantled was "shortened" (*Times*, 16/7/47). It must be remembered, of course, that not half a dozen of the big industrial works promised as reparations from the Western Zones to Yugoslavia, Poland or the U.S.S.R. have ever reached those States. In the course of these discussions the Americans finally refused to agree to nationalisation of the Ruhr coal mines, demanding postponement for five years (*News Chronicle*, 11/7/47, and *Daily Express*, 17/7/47).

Equally significant, the United States Government sent a "directive" to General Clay, its Military Governor, ordering him only to "eliminate industry used *solely* for the manufacture of arms, ammunition and the implements of war," and to reduce but not prohibit production which supported these industries. Moreover, the United States Government did not wish "to impose its own historically developed forms of democracy and social organisation"; but General Clay was to go on encouraging those political parties whose programme shows "allegiance to democratic principles," and should withdraw the privileges of parties "adopting or advocating undemocratic practices or ideas" (*Times*, 16/7/47).

A plan to stop the advance of Socialism in Europe, and if possible to throw back the advance towards it already made by a number of countries, "overcoming the limitation of national barriers" with the help of the dollar: a plan to isolate the Soviet Union and if possible retard it in its economic reconstruction and deny it just reparation: a plan to rebuild, as the spearhead of a Western bloc, a highly industrialised and anti-communist Western Germany which is already riddled with Nazi business men in high positions: these are the contours of the real Marshall "plan," as it has emerged into the daylight in the course of barely two months.

The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into any correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

The articles in LABOUR MONTHLY are indexed in the International Index to Periodicals, New York City, U.S.A., as well as in the annual index in each December issue.

Book Review

A Tract for the Times

Mirror of the Present by K. Zilliacus
(Meridian Books, 5s.).

"The danger of losing the peace again, through once more trying to fight the social revolution, thereby not stopping it, but making it come the hard way, perhaps even at the prohibitive cost to civilisation of another world war, is already a cloud considerably bigger than a man's hand, and much nearer than the horizon. For the United States is more and more going in for counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet power politics in Eastern Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Far East. Uncle Sam has taken over the unlovely role of John Bull after the First World War, with a vengeance."

Around this central theme Zilliacus has written an urgent and important book to awaken fellow-members in the Labour Party and the general public to the serious issues of the present international situation.

The book shows signs of the haste with which it has had to be written. It contains so many quotations and extracts, significant and sometimes less significant, that the thread of the main argument is in danger of being obscured. It contains a long excursus on Marxism, which reveals the weakness of dependence on unsatisfactory secondary sources. Russell, Strachey, etc., for information on Marxism. It contains a long excursus on the Soviet Union, which derives a great deal of its material from the memoirs of a so-called "Old Bolshevik," opponent of the regime. While recognising the decisive role of Communism in present-day Europe, Zilliacus still affects to regard Communism in Britain and the United States as negligible, which would suggest that his relatively late conversion from Norman Angellism after the world economic crisis of 1929-32 has still

only taken him some of the way and by no means all the way to a clear understanding of the social forces of our time.

Nevertheless it is an important book. For Zilliacus is undoubtedly the clearest, most courageous and consistent fighter in the Parliamentary Labour Party against the disastrous Churchill-Bevin policy which is at present dominant.

The Margate Labour Party Conference revealed how great is the need of clarification on these issues. Margate revealed not only the wide measure of support on which the official Churchill-Bevin policy can still count, but also the confusion in the ranks of the Left opposition within the Labour Party as voiced at Margate, and their lack of a clear and consistent foreign policy. The pamphlet "Keep Left" showed how this confusion plays into the hands of Bevin's policy and ends in virtual identity with it under a dressing of social-democratic phrases.

In contrast to the authors of "Keep Left," Zilliacus has a much firmer grasp and encyclopædic knowledge of international affairs over the past quarter of a century. On the basis of his experience as a League of Nations official and active publicist and pamphleteer in touch with the main personalities and events of international politics during the critical years between the wars, he is able to trace the origins and breeding-ground of present problems. He shows how the policies of reaction and hostility to democracy and the Soviet Union wrecked the peace after the first world war, restored the power of Germany and built up Fascism, and thus prepared the second world war. He shows how the present policies of Anglo-American reaction are endeavouring to repeat this fatal path, but in a world in which the forces of socialism and democracy are enormously stronger.

The decisive world role of leader of reaction which was played by Britain in the years between the wars has now been taken over by the United States, with Britain as second fiddler. At the

same time he shows how the world reactionary policy and aggressive expression of American imperialism is dependent on British support, and how in this sense Britain occupies a key position today.

"The believers in power-politics in the United States know that their 'be tough with Russia' policy will collapse unless they can count on the subservience of the British Government."

Hence the bitter truth of his criticism of Tory and Right Wing Labour policy.

"The only people who have learned nothing since 1917, when they disastrously hated and feared the prospect of radical change, are Anglo-American Tories and Right Wing Labour folk in Britain. Even after the Second World War and all the years between, they still at bottom prefer Fascism to social revolution."

This is a brilliant contribution to current political controversy. It should be widely read, circulated and studied for an understanding of present events. That it has its weaknesses has been indicated. But its merits far outweigh its defects.

R. PALME DUTT.

Occupational Placement, Its History, Philosophies, Procedures and Educational Implications by Anna Y. Reed (Cornell University Press, U.S.A.; English edition: Oxford University Press, 350 pp., 22s 6d).

"Occupational Placement" is an American technical term for the task of employment agencies and labour exchanges. This is a kind of elementary textbook giving detailed information about the functioning of employment agencies: how the office should be equipped, what forms to be used, what kind of publicity, etc. Who looks into this book for the promised history and philosophy will be disappointed. The history consists of some quotations from the Bible, and some facts from recent U.S.A. history, while the main "philosophical" problem seems to be whether an agency should charge fees or not.

J. W.

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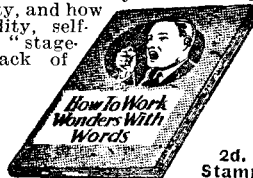
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